

Title: Ch. 3: Regatta

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With the help of my patron, Lanavar, I acquired a used ship, the Brite Star.

I took it on a brief run along the Eastern Coast, and found it to be sturdy and quite seaworthy. I decided to test the limits of the Brite Star, so I made port in Trinsic to take on supplies at the Keg and Anchor. While there, I heard reports of a Regatta scheduled in Trinsic that afternoon. This would be a fitting test of my new ship!

A regatta is one of the oldest competitive traditions among sailors. It is a race along a predetermined course, a true test of ships and the men who crew them. This regatta was a short run around the continent, though the exact course was not known to the racers ere it began. Instead, those involved were told only the location of the first checkpoint, from whence we were given the location of the second checkpoint, and so on through the course.

The Trinsic council of Honor held the regatta, and, entry fee in hand, I made my Introductions to the Mayor of Trinsic, Lily Prower. My fee was accepted, and the Brite Star was negotiated to the starting line by the

Regatta coordinator, a notable named Valdor Kanz, of the Knights of Sosaria. Once my boat was in place, I returned to the shore to await the other racers.

There were only two other entries that day. Zil arrived soon after I did, and though his ship seemed to look a bit...rough, he had a look of fierce determination in his eyes, and a hint of a smile on his lips. Though I knew not how much sea-going experience he had, I knew he would make up for any lack with guile and sharp wit.

The other competitor was one Eliphas Binael, a Follower of Armageddon. His features were unreadable beneath the Shroud of shadows he wore, and the only comment he made prior to the race was "I hope the weather holds." We competitors wished each other luck, and Valdor Kanz went over the rules one final time. With a cry of "Racers, ready, set, go!" the race was underway.

Some of you are aware of the bond between a Sailor and his ship, or the bond between the Craftsman who built the ship. There is also a bond between the keys to the ship and the ship itself. This bond allows the use of the recall spell upon the key to take one directly to the ship's deck. Eliphas Binael utilized this function much quicker than I, and was off. Zil was a paladin, and as the world dissolved around me, I saw him try to use Sacred Journey, and

watched it fizzle.

Knowing now that I was in Second from the lead, I moved quickly for open water. "Raise anchor! Come about and make speed!" I barked at the tillerman.

"Aye, sir," the implacable tillerman replied, and we were underway. I checked the coordinates I had been given, and quickly glanced at my Atlas to confirm my initial guess as to the first checkpoint: The small chain of Islands North of Trinsic.

I coasted up to the shore, kicking the gangplank down as the vehicle slowed to a stop. I saw the figure of Eliphas on the deck of ship, already leaving the isle's shore and setting a course south. Upon receiving my next set of coordinates, I was informed that I was not second, but was in fact last! Apparently Zil, though faced with a slow start, had overtaken both of us and was now in the lead! It was a fine bit of seamanship, though I was undaunted.

The next waypoint was for a spot off the Western coast of the continent, just south of the city of Yew. I knew that Eliphas had taken a southern route around the continent, and had no clue as to the route taken by Zil. (He told me later, with a wry grin, that he ended up running aground in the orc fort near Cove. It seems his enthusiasm and deft handling of his ship were not tempered by a knowledge of geography.) I decided for what was

the shortest, and riskiest, route: Sail due east through the open ocean. It has always been known that the world is round, and thus, like my Namesake proved in the annals of history, it is possible to circumnavigate the globe. As long as the Brite Star was as seaworthy as I believed, I could quickly shoot across the open ocean, skirting past Moonglow, and close the lead the others had.

The ship was sound, and I made good time, deftly issuing commands to skirt a water elemental in my path. I turned my attention to the brute as it fell behind us, casting a blade spirit to slow it from its pursuit. The vessel slammed to a stop suddenly, and as the Tillerman said blandly, "We've stopped, sir," I turned to face a second Elemental gripping the bow!

I had the presence of mind to cast the Protection spell upon myself before the race began, so my magical channeling was not interrupted by the wave of attacks I was hit with, allowing me to Dispatch the elementals and get underway once more, cursing myself for letting my attention slip.

I landed at the next Checkpoint, greeted by the Mayor of Trinsic who was pulling double duty for this event. "Well," she said, "It seems you are now in first place." With a smile she gave me coordinates to the Next checkpoint: A ship weighing anchor in the southern portion of the Western sea.

The cruise to this
waypoint was uneventful,
and as I docked with the
Ship, Valdor hailed me.

"You are making
excellent time," he said.
"Your competitors have
yet to reach the second
Checkpoint. Keep it up!"
and he gave me the next
set of coordinates.

This point was on the
coast of the Northern
Penninsulae: the long
tracts of land jutting
into sea northeast of
Minoc. The Northern Sea
is known for its
turbulent waters, so I
knew my work was cut
out for me. I set a
course south again,
knowing it would be the
quickest route to the
Northern Sea.

As I suspected, the
waters were rough,
Prompting the normally
silent Tillerman to
complain several times. I
myself uttered a few
curses as the waves
tossed the Brite Star.

I made it to the next
checkpoint and received
word that Zil was making
up for lost time, though
Eliphas had yet to be
seen.

The final set of
coordinates were a return
to the starting point,
where we were to hand
over the written list of
coordinates to the finish
line judge. I set course
east, then south, cutting
across the Bay of
Britain. I was fairly
confident that victory
was assured, though I
knew enough that anything
could happen between here
and there. I made good
time; there were several
more elementals along my
course, but instead of
fighting, I maneuvered

around them, Knowing I could not afford a delay with Zil close behind. I arrived first, to be greeted at the shore by Sir Robert, Eland, and the rest of the race officiators, along with several spectators, and the press. Perhaps I should have issued some kind of epic statement, or given a grand speech, but instead, I waved in recognition of the brief applause I received, and said, "If you have a way to let the other racers know, inform them there are many water elementals between the last checkpoint and finish line." As a man of the sea, I tried to help fellow sailors, as I hoped they would help me. Soon after my arrival, Zil arrived, a bit chagrined, but we all had a fine time sharing tales of the race. Eliphas never reached the second checkpoint. I received a Ghost Ship Anchor as my trophy, which I put on display at my home. Now confident of my seamanship, I set out in search of a new challenge...